

7-1-1956

# Theology, News and Notes - Vol. 03, No. 04

Fuller Theological Seminary

Paul King Jewett

William Sanford LaSor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fuller.edu/tnn>Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

## Recommended Citation

Fuller Theological Seminary; Jewett, Paul King; and LaSor, William Sanford, "Theology, News and Notes - Vol. 03, No. 04" (1956).  
*Theology News & Notes*. 6.  
<https://digitalcommons.fuller.edu/tnn/6>

This Periodical is brought to you for free and open access by the Fuller Seminary Publications at Digital Commons @ Fuller. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theology News & Notes by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Fuller. For more information, please contact [archives@fuller.edu](mailto:archives@fuller.edu).

THEOLOGY NEWS & NOTES  
FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

William Sanford LaSor, Editor

VOLUME 3

July 1956

NUMBER 4

(The opinions expressed in this letter are those of the editor and guest editors, and are not the official views of the Seminary.)

Dear Alumni and Alumnae:

As you read these words, I shall be (if I calculate correctly) trying to learn more of the wonders of the German language in the University of Vienna. The actual work of getting out the regular issue of TN&N is being supervised by one (or perhaps several) of my good colleagues, and the prexy's faithful secretary, Mrs. Kimber. Incidentally, most of you do not know Mrs. Kimber, as she came aboard since you shipped out. But the beautiful appearance of TN&N each issue, the fidelity of the mailing list, and all those other details that go into making a regular paper regular, are the results of her efforts. Moreover, she keeps me reminded of deadlines, tells me when an article is too long to fit the space, and in other ways jogs my failing memory. Here's to Mrs. Kimber from all of us!

I've asked Dr. Paul Jewett to be our guest editor for this issue, and he has turned in an article which is, in my opinion, well worth all the space it takes. This is stenographically reported from addresses given by Professor Jewett at the ministers' retreat of the Conservative Baptist Association of Southern California. Maybe I can get Professor Roddy to give us an abstract of what he told the Baptists on the east coast last spring, for the next issue. Go ahead, Paul.

CONCERNING CHRISTIAN UNITY--by Paul King Jewett

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!  
It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the  
beard, upon the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his  
robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains  
of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life for  
evermore.  
Psalm 133 (RSV)

The announced theme for our retreat is "Dwelling in Unity." I would begin by noting the timeliness of this theme. It is a commonplace of experience that the human mind is unable to sustain a keen interest in any one subject indefinitely. This is true, not only on the level of individual experience, but also of our corporate experience. In different ages, divers themes have particularly agitated the Church, as even a cursory acquaintance with church history shows. The greatest controversy in the ancient church, one which threatened the very unity of the church as nothing had since the time of the Judaizers, was the Arian debate over the relation of the Son to the Father. The Medieval Scholastics, in turn, argued for centuries on the problem of the one and the many. Which is the ultimately real--chair, or these particular chairs? At the time of the Protestant Reformation, the great question was authority in religion. Was it to be found in the Scriptures or in the Church? Then later, with the rise of German liberalism, as it finally worked its way



out to the history of religions school, the debated moved into such ultimate questions as the very character of Christianity. Does it rest upon supernatural revelation, or may it be exhaustively explained in terms of those categories accessible to the critical historian?

If there is any theme which is peculiarly modern and belongs to the century in which we live, it is that of ecumenicity. It would appear that when church history has been completed our century will stand out for its quest of unity.

Turning then to our subject, let us consider first of all the basis of Christian unity, secondly the bond of Christian unity, and finally the expression of Christian unity.

The Basis of Christian Unity. To get immediately to the subject, I should say that the basis of Christian unity is not theological uniformity, creedal unanimity, but rather a vital union with Jesus Christ as common Lord and Savior; that is just to say that a Protestant Christian has more in common with a devout Roman Catholic than with those in his own ecclesiastical communion whose Christianity is a matter of mere form and outward expression. A man may be never so orthodox in his creed, never so active in the church, but if he be not truly converted to Christ by the regenerative work of the Spirit, there is a dimension lacking which is absolutely essential to Christian unity. One is immediately reminded of the skill with which John Bunyan portrays the character of Mr. Talkative who lived on Prating Row in the City of Destruction. He could dilate on any theme in theology from supralapsarianism to the Seven Last Plagues; but though he loved to talk, he suddenly refused to carry on the conversation when Faithful began to press him regarding the implications of all these glorious themes for his own private life, his daily practice. Paul expresses this truth of a vital union with the Savior, in the formula "in Christ." This formula, or its equivalent, occurs well over one hundred times in his writings. According to Paul, God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). We are sanctified in Christ Jesus, we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Eph. 2:10). We are justified in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). Paul writes to the Corinthians that he begat them in Christ Jesus (I Cor. 4:15). Those who have died are in Christ. They are, as he says, "fallen asleep in Christ" (I Cor. 15:18), and in the same chapter the resurrection of the saints is "in Christ." "In Christ shall all be made alive," (I Cor. 15:22). This relationship which we sustain to Christ has revolutionized the whole of life. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (II Cor. 5:17). This new life manifests itself in all the relationships that we sustain to our fellow men. A Christian is, according to Paul, free to marry only in the Lord (I Cor. 7:39). He exhorts children to obey their parents in the Lord (Eph. 6:1). Wives are to be in submission to their own husbands as is fit in the Lord (Col. 3:18).

In the light of this pleroma of material, we do well to seek to classify it briefly. I suggest that first of all, union with Christ for Paul involves a federal or covenantal relation. He writes in I Cor. 15:22, "for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (See also Romans 5:12ff.) Adam acted as our representative. His actions therefore are imputed to us. We fall in him. So also Christ is a representative of His people, the new humanity, and in Him we are reckoned to have fulfilled the requirements of the law and to have suffered the penalty for our sin. He is therefore called "the last Adam."



Secondly, the union is spiritual. By the word "spiritual" we mean that the bond of this union is the Holy Spirit. It is He who effects the union by dwelling in the heart of each believer, and since He is the same Spirit who dwells in Christ, there is one living vital principle in both the Head and the members of the body. As Paul says, "For as by one Spirit we are all baptized into the one body" (I Cor. 12:13). The union is also spiritual in distinction from the metaphysical. We are "in Christ" not in the sense that Christ is in the Godhead. We do not become one essence with Him; much less do we lose our individual and personal existence. However, the union does involve the inmost being of man--his spirit is the seat of this union, and therefore it is proper, I should say, to speak of this union as spiritual. If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

In the third place, the union is mystical. We use this term not primarily in the sense of an ineffable feeling about which one cannot speak, although there is that in our union with Christ which goes beyond rational analysis; we cannot wholly penetrate it lucidly; we cannot reduce it simply to moral sympathy; to the unity of sentiment, purpose and ideal. The union between Christ and His people is not merely that of teacher and pupil, who share the same goals and ideals, hopes and aspirations, as in classic liberalism. There is an incomprehensible richness and inscrutable aspect to this union. Primarily, however, the mystical union which we have in Christ refers to the fact that it is something which can be grasped and understood only within the context of revelation. Paul uses the word "mystery" in this sense. It is a truth which cannot be discovered by reason, apart from Divine revelation. Such a truth, for example, would be the inclusion of the Gentiles in the blessings of the Covenant made with Israel. Jesus also, it would appear, used the word "mystery" in this sense when He talked of the mystery of the Kingdom and taught His disciples in parables.

Finally, the union with Christ is indissoluble. We cannot here follow the implications of this and discuss the whole question of perseverance. I simply cite the familiar concluding verses of Paul's argument in Romans 8: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." There have been those who have objected, "Yes, this is quite true, but we may separate ourselves from Christ." This is, to say the least, highly anti-climactic. Paul has piled up language in heaps; he has exhausted his vocabulary, as it were, to make it very plain that nothing--positively nothing--can separate the true believer from the love of God in Christ. If it is true that we can separate ourselves, Paul's argument is really deflated to the dimensions of oratory for oratory's sake. What comfort is there in the fact that neither angels nor principalities nor powers can separate us from God's love, if we can do it for ourselves? If Paul were an Arminian, he could hardly have written this passage.

As a result of this review, we can see what it is that binds us all in one common fellowship. It is that we are "in Christ," members of one body. You will notice then that the New Testament concept of Christian unity is definitely oriented in terms of soteriology. The communion of saints which we confess in the creed is not simply a communion of all people of good will. There is no room here for the common fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. It is rather very specifically a matter of a vital



relationship to Jesus Christ. Paul frequently speaks of the unity on the basis of being "in Christ." "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love" (Eph. 5:6). And again, "...there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

The figures of speech employed by the writers of Scripture to enforce this concept of union with Christ and with one another are very suggestive. Paul uses the figure of a body in a most effective way. "For as the body is one and hath many members and all members of the body being many are one body, so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized in one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:12ff). He also employs the figure of a building in Ephesians 2:19-22, where he speaks of Christ as the chief cornerstone in which each several building "fitly framed together groweth into the holy temple of the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." One Puritan comments quaintly that the several stones in this temple are held together by the "vermilion cement of Christ's blood." Another figure that Paul uses is that of the bride and the groom. Christians constitute the Bride of Christ. This figure is also beautifully employed in the 21st of Revelation by John: "And I saw the city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, arrayed as a bride adorned for her husband." It is also interesting that our Lord, when speaking of the union between Himself and His people, employs the figure of the vine and the branches. The vine symbolized in the Old Testament the people of God. Compare Jeremiah 2:21-22 and similar passages. So this figure of the vine is peculiarly adapted to designate the union between God and His people, and it is also significant that our Lord appeals to this union, which binds His people in one with Himself, as the sign whereby the world shall know that He was indeed sent of God. "The glory which thou hast given me, I have given unto them that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one that the world may know that thou didst send me and lovest them, even as thou lovest me" (John 17:22, 23). All these figures tend to stress the strength, the vitality, the intimacy of the union which binds us one to another in Christ Jesus our Lord. Unity, then, is the hallmark, the peculiar character of the Christian community which sets it off from the world, and enables the world to tell that we are Christians; and this unity has its basis in the vital relationship which we sustain to Christ, our common Lord and Savior, and in Him to one another as members of His body.

DR. LA SOR'S LETTER:

Mosquitobite Manor, Alta, Norway, 30 June

Dear Fellows and Girls:

I had hoped to begin this letter to you with the following words: "I am writing this to you from the top of the world, at midnight, in the bright sunshine of the arctic." But here is how it really happened. We took the Midnight Sun cruise from Hammerfest, after driving north from Helsinki through Finland. The weather had been increasingly bad for a couple of days; but you know how the human being is ever optimistic. "Maybe it will break before we get there," we kept telling each other. Our time schedule was too tight to permit another day's delay. So, off we went. Almost as soon as we cleared the harbor, we knew we were in for a rough passage. When the First Mate came into the salong



and threw down a bunch of Mal de Mer boxes, our Betsy remarked that he didn't know much about psychology. No--but he knew about keeping his ship clean. From then on, boxes were the order of the day. When "middag" was announced, we boldly ventured into the spisesalong, but one look at the Smorgasbord and the varmrätt, which consisted of a goulash mostly blobs of fat, turned us back. We dined on dramamine, instead.

Soon we reached North Cape. Its familiar profile was faintly visible in the thick mist, and my light meter gave no reading at all with the slide in. The ship was pitching too much for a time exposure. Besides, my tripod was in the salong, and I had no desire to go inside. What did I do? What all the rest of the tourists did--opened it to the full f.2, set it for 1/10 sec., and held it in my hands for an exposure. I know even before the film is out of the camera what it will look like. But who is going back to the North Cape a second time hoping for better? There was some question whether we would get ashore. In a way I wish the captain had decided negative. But we put in to the harbor, climbed crazily into the lighter to go ashore, and then began the climb up the cliff. It must be 30,000 feet high, and straight up. I must have expected elevators, or escalators, for I hadn't even worn my boondockers. If you ever go there, take my advice: plenty of lightweight, warm clothing and good hiking boots. The wind was right off the north pole; why the rain wasn't sleet I'll never know. The path wasn't even "for the birds." I think a worm would have gone underground at the sight of it. I made it, at long last, in short pants, as they say in Sauerbraten. That is, I thought I made it. Only, when you get to the top of the cliff, you find that another path (?) leads up a long, gradual incline, a mile or so, to the cape. The mist was so thick we almost walked past the cape when we got there. I still think my first question was a good one: "Now, what did we do this for?"

To be perfectly frank, I didn't think about you at all up there. And I could not have carried this typewriter along if I had thought of you. I couldn't even have carried my favorite letter (I). I was licked. That climb, in a howling gale, with nothing but dramamine--and not even a merit badge for Freddy! All I could think of was, how do I get down again, and if I do, who wants to go back on that ship?

So, here it is, the next night. I am writing this at 11:15 p.m., in bright daylight. It's not the North Cape, but it's still about Latitude 70°. And I am thinking of each one of you, wishing I could drop in on all of you, as I have recently on six of our alumni. The lines of longitude are closer together here. If I could get up higher, they would converge. Which gives me a happy thought in closing: When we get up high enough, the lines of difference that now separate us in so many earthly ways, will at last disappear, and we shall find that the great pole star of our faith has led us unerringly to the place of perfect unity.

God bless you, each one.

William Sanford LaSor

#### BOOKS--WSLS and others

In keeping with our expressed hope in the last issue, we are presenting in this issue a review of one of the faculty writings. At the time I wrote about trying to arrange for review copies and reviewers, the publishers must



have received a telepathic message, for the review copy came in a few days. For those of you who do not know the reviewer, let me introduce Dr. David Wallace, BD (Fuller) '51, ThM (Fuller) '53, Student Assistant in Greek, PhD (Edinburgh) '55, linguist, traveller, and a real swell guy. You're on, Dave.

The Blessed Hope, by George E. Ladd. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1956. Pp. 167, \$3.00.) In this book Dr. Ladd sets forth the thesis that the Blessed Hope of the Christian church is not the expectation of deliverance from wrath and tribulation, but rather "the Blessed Hope is the glorious epiphany of Our Lord Himself." Written in a forthright and lucid style, the argument is directed against popular misconceptions which are traceable to exegetical distortions of the Dispensational school of interpretation. Dr. Ladd addresses himself to the layman rather than the technical scholar; indeed, this is fitting, for discussion of this subject is to be conducted at this level. The doctrine of a pre-tribulation rapture has gained wide acceptance among evangelicals in Great Britain and this country since the rise of the influence of J. N. Darby. The purpose of the book is to expose the fallacies which underlie the pre-tribulation theory, and to demonstrate the alternative option of post-tribulationism as exegetically defensible.

The book opens with a survey of citations from the church fathers which are frequently adduced by Dispensationalists to prove that pre-tribulationism was the prevailing doctrine in the early church. A careful perusal of these passages shows that such inferences are unwarranted, and in fact the early church held to quite the opposite point of view. Dr. Ladd next details the rise of pre-tribulationism which originated in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century, principally among the Plymouth Brethren. In this chapter are given the names of several prominent American evangelicals who broke with the Dispensational school after seeing its weaknesses. The nomenclature of eschatology is handled: parousia, apokalypsis and epiphaneia. Also examined are such terms as tribulation, rapture and the resurrection.

In addition to the main argument of the book, there breathes throughout a spirit of Christian gentlemanliness and courtesy. It is a truism to state that distressingly often believers have become divided over non-essentials, and this book provides a much-needed corrective.

(WSLS) Some of you may have read Gods, Graves, and Scholars, a few years back. That was the book on archaeology that was bought by a big-time movie producer and turned into a super-colossal smasher. Well, the author has done it again. C. W. Ceram (his nom de plume), The Secret of the Hittites (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1956). If you wish, you can read it in the untranslated German, Engel Schlucht und schwarzer Berg. The author writes with a charming style, yet with obvious familiarity not only with his subject, but with the personalities, the geography, the history, the archaeology, and the linguistics of the subject. The Hittite picture is rapidly coming into focus, now that the Karatepe bilingual inscription has cracked the Hittite hieroglyphs. Once again, Old Testament Histories will have to be rewritten, and the Old Testament will be better understood. Careful Bible scholars will have to distinguish between the Hittites and the Hittites, i.e., between those who lived in Canaan and those who lived in Asia Minor. After you read this book (you will be too fascinated to do it while reading), go through your copy of my OTH syllabus and make the necessary revisions. Don't be caught making foolish statements about the Hittites! There is no excuse for it, now. \* \* \*



## WHAT LANGUAGE DO YOU SPEAK?--WSLS

Dan Thrapp, genial Religion Editor of the L.A. Times, who on occasion has quoted from TN&N, had an article in his "Southland Parish," not long ago, that deserves a lot of attention. "Listening to sermons in different churches each week we have come to suspect that many ministers are preaching over the heads of their congregations--figuratively as well as literally," he says. He goes on to point out that "every profession develops a jargon of its own...and the ministry is no exception. After talking with a number of regular churchgoers we suspect that much of what the minister assumes is understood by them is, in fact, quite incomprehensible."

He recognizes correctly that in any profession, specialized terms are handy for the professional person. This is what we sometimes refer to as "vocabulary control." It refers to that specialized vocabulary that belongs so exclusively to any given profession that even trained secretaries are unable to take dictation without developing new word-signs. I well remember a science major in Seminary in our days, who went through most of a term in theology writing "crystallogy" every time the prof said "Christology."

Thrapp says, "How many communicants really understand the doctrine of original sin, for instance?...Understand the Atonement, the other basic doctrines? We suspect the number is fewer than most ministers believe." He suggests an informal survey in a congregation might reveal interesting and valuable information.

He is right, of course. Most ministers forget how long it took them in seminary to understand the content of these professional terms. They should at least give their congregation the benefit of regular training in the meaning of theological words and expressions. There was a day when some of us learned in childhood what sin, and justification, and sanctification, and prayer, etc., were. Catechisms had at least that much value.

But I would go beyond what my friend says. In my own experience, I have found ministers substituting one set of professional terms for another. "Integration" replaces "salvation," and "therapeutic value" takes the place of the healing ministry of Jesus. The problem of evil, which has never been too easy to understand, is discussed in part under the perfectly clear name of "dys-theological surd," and it is impossible to get into any of these subjects except by "epistemology." Man's religion is so circumscribed by the "horizontal reference" that the "vertical encounter" is forgotten. "Agape" is so much better understood than "love,"--and let us not forget the "Sitz im Leben."

Yes, I do it myself, sometimes. Did you ever wonder, Dan, whether part of the fault is not traceable to the congregation itself? When I use the modern jargon, they lap it up. "Such a brilliant sermon!" They don't understand it any better, I know. They want to be entertained; and psychology and philosophy, with a sprinkling of science, entertains them; theology bores them. But you are still right, Dan. It probably would shock a lot of us; but a test of the congregation's understanding of our vocabulary should be made periodically. How can we "communicate" if there is no "rapport"?



A SPECIAL APPEAL TO OUR ALUMNI

Fuller Seminary has grown at an amazing rate in the past eight years. In fact, it has outgrown its means of support--which, unless something is done, could develop into a serious situation. Usually, as a young school develops, it has time to win new friends, build up endowments, add professors, acquire the necessary equipment, and take on all those other things that go into a first-class educational institution. Fuller Seminary has been hurled into a position, the size and importance of which demands the best in every department of its life, without the necessary time to develop financial undergirding. We need your help. We need lots of friends: thousands of wonderful people who will contribute some small amount to express their confidence; and hundreds of those especially blessed Christians who have the means to make substantial gifts. But especially we need the continued prayer- and financial-support of our Alumni. In more ways than one, you are our very life.